Speed the Work.

BY J. W. REER.

Speed the work, speed the work,
For the age is passing by.
"Come and help, come and help,"
Still the Macedonian's cry.
They are calling from the east,
They are pleading in the west;
They are freezing in the north,
And are dying in the south,
For a hope on which to rest.

Speed the work, speed the work:
For the work must needs be done.
Preach the word, preach the word;
Till the heathen lands be won.
'Tis the loving Father's will,
'Tis the Savior's high command,
'Tis the Holy Spirit's plea,
That the word, from sea to sea,
Should be preached in every land.

Speed the work, speed the work,
For your work must soon be done.
Preach the word, live the word,
For your race will soon be run.
Work in earnest while 'tis day,
Give yourself, your means, your all;
Teach, invite, yea, warn and plead,
Give what'er the cause may need,
And heed the Master's call.

Speed the work, speed the work,
Not a moment should be lost.
Jesus died to redeem
Dying souls at wondrous cost.
To the Father he has gone,
But he soon will come again,
Come to take his people home,
All who freely to him come,
And o'er the world to reign.

Altamont, Cal., Nov. 28th, 1887.

Christian Farming.

A SERMON BY EDWARD MASON.

Behold a sower went forth to sow. Matt. 13: 3,

God's laws are unchangeable. We see evidence of this around us everywhere. If we look above into the starry firmament at the myriads of worlds that twinkle down upon us, and remember that ever since God hurled them into infinite space, and sent them revolving in their orbits, that they have not deviated one iota from the course marked out for them. For forty centuries at least have they gone on. One solar system revolving around another solar system, and these again around some far distant centre. So regular are their courses that astronomers are able to foretell eclipses and transits centuries before they come to pass. Then, too, beneath our feet we see evidences of the immutability of Jehovah's laws. Ever since the creation, seed time and harvest, summer and winter, spring and autumn have never failed.

One of the most prominent of God's laws is that "whatsoever a man sows that shall he reap." This is recognized and known to all. When we put turnip seed into the ground, we do not expect to gather pumpkins. When we plant corn we do not expect to harvest thistles. We expect to gather what we sow. If we sow wheat, we will gather wheat, when we sow barley we will harvest barley. This is an unchangeable law of God. Never has there been any deviation from it.

So is this principle applicable in spiritual matters. If we sow love, love will be the fruit. If we sow hate, hate will be the harvest. From this, too, there is no deviation. "Behold a sower went forth to sow." God is the great seed sower. Ever since he spoke the world into existence he has been scattering the seeds of love upon the human family. We cannot see one seed of hate that he has sown. All has been love, love, love. If we begin at the garden of Eden that he prepared for the abode of man, it was love. And even when he turned our first parents out of this paradise, it was an act of love and mercy. The fault-finder, and the grumbler will point to this act and say this was not the seed of love. But when we examine the matter carefully we will find that this seemingly unkind act was even an act of love. By looking for the reason of their expulsion from this happy abode, we will find that it was not a mere punishment. The penalty of their disobedience was, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." It was not expulsion. This was never mentioned. But in a subsequent verse we will find something like this, "Lest they should eat of the Tree of life and live forever, therefore the Lord cast them out." The truth is that it was an act of tender mercy in taking them away from the possibility of making themselves eternally wretched. In some mysterious way they had it in their power to place themselves beyond the hope of salvation. The Lord removed them to keep them from damning their souls forever. So all along the history of the whole human family we find the Lord scattering the seeds of love. Every action was dictated by infinite love. In return for man's disobedience, man's weaknesses, his rebellions and rejections, he has given us love. This reached the climax when "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Now some of us may ask where is the harvest? Remembering his continual seed sowing, and according to his unchangeable law there must be a harvest. It is true as we look at the world as we find it today, with all its wickedness and crime, it does not look much like a harvest of love. But we are glad to know that the harvest is coming. It is fast growing. In the fullness of time the field will be white with the fruit of love. We have the Lord's prophecy, that the day is coming when the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The little stone that was cut out of the mountain side without hands, will roll on through the centuries, until it shall become a huge mountain that will cover the whole earth.

It often happens that we see a field here and there with a very sorry harvest. It was only the other day that we saw such a field with only a stalk of corn here and there, while on either side and around it were fields that promised a bountiful harvest. We asked a neighboring farmer the reason of this, "Oh" was the reply, "he was too stingy with his seed corn." That is often the case with us. If we sow sparingly, we shall reap sparingly. But God has sown abundantly, and so will the harvest be abundant. This is the inevitable result.

But this is all well enough in a general way. But our theme is not intended to be one of mere general application. It is very individual. The Gospel is very personal. So we mean to apply it tonight. We want you all to understand this sermon to be one of individual application. There is always a tendency to fit Gospel truths on our neighbors and entirely forget ourselves. It was only a short time ago, in a certain county of this state, that while I was preaching, I noticed that the good, respectable people would frequently look back to see if those sinners in the rear part of the church were taking these facts home to themselves. This continued until I had to tell them that I was preaching to them—that they were the very parties I was after. Again here in this very institution, about four years ago, on going out to the passage after the services, a brother, who occupied a very prominent position in the College said to me, "well Bro. Mason, that sermon just hit Bro.—" "No, no, my brother," I replied, "you are the man I was after." This is how we apply the sermons sometimes. Now tonight, I want you all to remember I am preaching a personal sermon.

"Behold a sower went forth to sow." God sows nothing but good seed, and he sows it in good soil. The soil is the human heart. Can we grasp at the great possibilities of the human heart for good. It is a grand field in which to grow the fruits of the Gospel. But after the good seed has been sown, we find nothing but useless weeds, what is to be done? If we are all honest with ourselves, and we will undertake to put ourselves through a rigid examination, we will find that there are more weeds in our hearts than there ought to be. God has been sowing love all along our lives. We have been blessed with kindness and care, and now what have we given in return?

A good many of this audience are farmers, and let me ask the practical question. If you have a good field that is covered with weeds, what will you do with it so that it may yield useful fruit? Like sensible men, you will get out the old plow. You will hitch the horses to it, and you will tear the old field all to pieces, and bury those weeds out of sight. You will get rid of them by plowing them under, and thus get the soil ready for another seeding. So must we do with the heart. The plow share of repentance must come in and tear up the weeds of sin, and prepare the soil of the soul for the good seed of salvation. I believe in the old time, Jerusalem repentance that gets away down deep into the subsoil of the heart. This skimming over and mere scratching of the surface will not do. To get a good crop we must plow deep. Out in California they are satisfied with a mere surface plowing. But we want something better and more substantial here. I heard somewhere about a man that told his son that there was a hundred dollars buried in a certain field, and that he should go and plow it up, and he would be sure to find it. It seems that this young man did not like to work any too well, but was very apt to shirk his duty when he had an opportunity. But here was an inducement. So at it he went. He plowed from fence to fence, and plowed very deep with the hope of finding the treasure. After he had done, he came in very much discouraged and told his father he had failed to find the money. "Never mind, my son," said the father, "wait until the fall, and you will find the hundred dollars." Deep plowing is what is needed for the soul. Get the plow shares away under the secret sins that are found away down in the recesses of the heart. Bring them up into the light of the Gospel. Let the Spirit of the Lord have a chance to work on them.

Now after we have had the ground plowed up that is not all that is necessary. Often the field is full of clumps and clods that need to be broken up. So the harrow is brought out, and it goes leaping from furrow to furrow pulverizing the soil and getting it more ready for the seed. This is just God's way of farming the soul. The harrow of affliction goes leaping through our lives, pulverizing the hard lumps of sin. It is under the weight of affliction that the heart gets softened. When sorrow and anguish strikes the heart, it is then getting in prepration for the seeding. Only a day or two ago we were called to preach the funeral of a beloved sister. As we saw the mourning and weeping friends, with bowed head and tear stained cheeks before me, and knowing that their hearts were then softened by the blow, I thought, Oh! that I could give an invitation for some of these sorrow stricken friends to come up right here in the presence of the dead, and express their intention to give their hearts to Christ. But custom said no. The opportunity is gone. And before we have another chance, the heart has again become callous. Have not some of you felt the heavy hand of affliction? It was the harrow of the great Husbandman, getting the soil of the heart ready for the seed.

But this is still not all. We often find men who have taken the trouble to plow up their fields, and the seed has been sown, and yet the crop has been a failure. You know, farmers, that when your corn has made its appearance, you will take your plows and hoes and "work" it. Yes the growing crop needs cultivating. We must watch it and do all we can to coax its further growth. Many a good crop has been lost because it has not been worked. A lazy man will never make a successful farmer. Neither will a lazy man ever make a Christian. Work, work, is the order of the Gospel. We must cultivate the good seed. We will, on our farms, take advantage of science and experience to cultivate our crops. Why will we not do the same with our souls? We find the farmers now learning that it is necessary to fertilize the soil. So has God supplied us with a fertilizer. The ordinances of the church are the Lord's fertilizers. We must use them so that the graces—the fruits of the Spirit may grow and develop. The ordinances induce the growth of these graces. This is what is needed in the church today. Let us therefore use the Lord's fertilizer. As soon as the germ has burst its tiny shell, and the small blade has shown itself above the soil, it needs careful watching and tending lest it wither and die. Yes there is a birth time of salvation, as well as a birth time of the plant. When the dormant germ of grace